

STANHOPE
URBAN SANITARY DISTRICT.

✦ ANNUAL REPORT ✦

OF THE
Medical Officer of Health,
FOR THE YEAR 1903.

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To the Slindone Urban District Council.



GENTLEMEN,

The following is my Annual Report for the year 1903.

VITAL STATISTICS.

	Estimated Population.	Birth Rate.	Death Rate.	Zymotic Rate.	Infant Mortality Rate.	Phthisis Death Rate.	Respiratory Diseases Death Rate.
1903.	1970	28.42	17.25	2.0	106.0	2.03	5.07
Averages for years 1893-1902	1942	27.3	14.78	1.9	74.2	1.9	2.0
County Rates for 1903		35.8	17.7	2.01	161	1.09	3.02

Of a total of 41 deaths occurring in the district, 18 were females and 23 males. Seven of this number were "non-residents". Four of the latter died in the Workhouse—one from Scotland, another from Tow Law, and 2 from Wolsingham Parish. The other three came from Crook, Hamsterley, and Washington. The remaining 34 gives a death-rate of 17.25 per 1,000 for the District.

The following are the ages at death:— Under one year, 6; one and under five, 3; five and under fifteen, 0; fifteen and under twenty-five, 4; twenty-five and under sixty-five, 10; sixty-five and over, 18.

Infectious Disease caused ^{two} ~~three~~ deaths, one from Diarrhœa and another from Smallpox—2 per 1,000.

Infant Mortality.—Under one year, two deaths were due to Premature Birth, one Debility from birth, one Convulsions, one to Bronchitis, and another to Diarrhœa.—a total of 6—a rate of 106 per 1,000 births.

Phthisis caused four deaths—a rate of 2.03 per 1,000.

Other Lung Diseases caused 10 deaths, four of which were due to Pneumonia—a rate of 5.07 per 1,000.

Births.—During the year a total of 56 births (29 males and ²⁷29 females) were registered—a rate of 28.4 per 1,000 births, compared with an average for the last 10 years of 27.3, and a County rate of 35.8.

Tables I, II, III, IV, are attached.

INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

During the year 15 cases of Infectious Disease were notified—4 of Scarlet Fever, 3 of Erysipelas, 3 of Enteric Fever and 5 of Smallpox.

Diarrhœa caused one death in an infant, and was not epidemic at any time during the year.

Scarlet Fever occurred in 3 houses. The first case occurred in February, the next two cases were infected from the first. The infection in the fourth case could not be traced. Disinfectants were supplied and the rooms were all fumigated and disinfected under Mr. Parker's supervision.

Typhoid or Enteric Fever.—The first case was notified on October 1st, in the person of the Council's Cartman, who no doubt was infected in the ordinary course of his duties. The second case was notified on November 3rd, and was an imported case from Coundon, while the third case notified on November 19th was without doubt due to an insanitary midden privy. The last case died. In all cases disinfectants were supplied, the excreta after disinfection were collected in closed vessels by your Council's servant and properly disposed of twice a day. Proper disinfection of houses was carried out under the supervision of your Inspector

Pulmonary **Tubercular Disease,**—Four deaths were due to ~~Pumonary~~ Phthisis—a rate of 2.03 per 1,000

I beg to again point out—as in my last report:—

1. That nearly all cases in this district are due to Inhalations of the Tubercle Bacillus in the form of dust.
2. That every case of consumption is due to some previous case, where the discharges (*e.g.* Sputum) have not been destroyed.
3. That indiscriminate spitting is dangerous, as early cases of consumption may go about for long before being recognised.
4. That being a dust disease, certain houses are tainted or infected, and lend themselves to remaining so indefinitely, owing to lack of proper ventilation and absence of direct sunshine.
5. That certain families are more prone to “catch” the infection than others.
6. That overcrowding of houses reduces the resisting power of the individual and renders him more liable to the disease.

And suggest as remedial measures:—

1. That further measures be taken to improve the sanitary condition of dwellings, particularly those of the working classes, *e.g.* as regards overcrowding, defective ventilation, damp, and general insanitary state.
2. That notification of cases where discharges are infectious be attempted, in order,
3. That disinfectants may be supplied by your Authority and a pocket spittoon with suitable instructions be given to lung cases.
4. That notices be posted in all places of assembly as to the dangers of indiscriminate spitting.

In two of the fatal cases the rooms were disinfected, and in one the paper was pulled off, walls linewashed and distempered.

Smallpox.—The first case was notified on June 17th in the person of a tramp mason who walked from the Presser Waterworks near Blanchland to Stanhope while the disease was in a state of eruption. The next cases were notified on July 4th, July 8th, July 9th, and July 10th, and no doubt were traceable to the first case who died on June 22nd. The outbreak was dealt with in a special report dated July 10th, where the following Recommendations were made:—

1. Immediate steps for Isolation by joining with the Rural District Council (Weardale) in their scheme to erect tents in a field on the edge of the moor beyond East Lane.

2. Thorough attention to all sanitary matters, *e.g.* yards ashpits, gullies, drains, etc., with a liberal application of some dependable disinfectant, *e.g.* Thymol Creosol.

3. Every support to Re-Vaccination.

4. Distribution of suitable literature *re* Smallpox, its history, prevention, etc.

5. Provision for complete disinfection of infected houses, by means of Formalin, and the spraying of walls, floor, furniture, etc., with strong disinfectants.

6. Arrangements as to compensation for the destruction of infected bedding, clothes, etc., and re-papering of rooms.

As a result your Council joined in the Rural Council scheme of erecting tents in a field which they had purchased near Jollybody. This field hospital was available for patients on July 24th, on which day all the cases were removed, where they remained until any risk of further infection had gone. The urban cases remained till the last week in August.

In the meantime all contacts were isolated for a time and the work of disinfection was commenced with and most thoroughly carried out by Mr. Parker personally. Fortunately a Thresh's disinfecter, belonging to the Joint Hospital was available for bedding, clothing, etc., which did away with the necessity for the destruction of infected clothing, and proved most useful and efficient. In every infected house, walls were stripped and sprayed with Corrosive Sublimate Solution, all furniture being washed with the same solution, and walls, ceilings, etc., afterwards limewashed and distempered. That the disinfection and other precautions were complete is evidenced by the fact that no further cases appeared.

GENERAL SANITATION.

Water Supply.—Has been plentiful and good.

Public Scavenging has been carried out very satisfactorily, although difficulties still arise from defective ashpits and the absence of back streets to certain houses.

Inspections and Results.—During the year 26 formal notices and 10 verbal notices have been served by your Inspector. Of these 17 have been attended to.

Of fifteen formal notices for defective privies and ashpits none have been attended to.

Two formal notices for defective yard paving are still unattended to.

Two formal notices for defective drains are also unattended to.

The verbal notices were given for defective traps, defective W.C., blocked drains, school ventilation, and have all been attended to.

One house was closed as unfit for habitation.

SANITARY IMPROVEMENTS.

1. Nine ashclosets at Cowgarthhill mentioned in last Report have been completed.
2. Six other privies have been converted into ashclosets.
3. One privy has been converted into W.C.
4. Cowbyres and stable at Newfield have been brought up-to-date with proper ventilation and lighting.

SANITARY REQUIREMENTS.

1. Some means of Isolating Infectious cases.
2. Better access to all back premises to facilitate Public Scavenging.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

JNO. GRAY,

March 3rd, 1904.